

Fellow Students,

The past few years have made patent the existence of flagrant administrative misdemeanors, opaqueness, and sexism and discrimination occurring across educational institutions. But what they have also borne testimony to is the fact that students will not bend and acquiesce to the whims and fancies of the administrations, but will stand up to challenge them with one voice.

On the 13th of March 2019, some students of RGNUL, Punjab protested against the quality of food served in the Boys Mess. On the 15th of March 2019, the Administration, mischaracterizing the protest, nitpicked six students, harassing them and violating their fundamental rights, wrongfully suspended them from the campus entirely – something which is not only an entirely disproportionate penalty, but also an egregious violation of rights by a University which claims itself to be an island of legal excellence. Since the evening of March 15th, extending till the present moment, the Students of RGNUL have been on a peaceful protest asking for the illegal suspension order to be revoked.

It is imperative to understand that this protest transpired not just because of the immediate issue at hand, but because of larger looming frustration persisting among the students due to rampant sexism, opaque and vengeful administration, unavailability of official documents and with no recourse to addressing these grievances. This unaccountable system was in a large part extant because of the lack of any student representation which can take up these issues with the administration. Previous attempts of formulating a student body have been foiled by the administration and vengeful action has been taken against those leading these attempts. At around 1 AM, 16th March 2019, the student community of RGNUL formulated the RGNUL Students Association to organize collectively and to represent the interests of the students before the administration in a democratic manner. Challenging the administration, this Student Association submitted a Representation to the authorities which in addition to the appeal for revocation of the penalty imposed against our six students, highlighted other key issues, viz. lack of transparency, discriminatory in-timings for girls and consociate rampant sexism by the Administrative Officer, and misuse of university resources.

This overnight protest has witnessed the administration manifesting its imperturbed behavior with respect to the issues highlighted by the students. Failing any adequate consideration paid to the issues during the overnight protest, the Students resorted to peaceful sloganeering which continued till the early morning of the 16th. At about 8 AM, two Judges of the Punjab and Haryana High Court addressed the students, and the suspended students were granted back their hostel and campus privileges pending the inquiry. However, ambiguity persists with respect to our other demands and to the extent we do not see constructive action on them, we will continue a silent protest. We submit that though many assurances have been made, we have little faith in Committees and the like as the same have been formulated in the past to dissuade the students from protesting but have yielded no results.

As protests in other NLUs have evinced, the student fraternity needs to stand united in support of movements against dictatorial administration. NLUs, and many other educational institutions are plagued by similar problems, and it is imperative that in this struggle against injustice in places where justice dispensation is taught, students stand in solidarity with the protestors, for this is

fight against a system which has been constructed against us. We beg not for charity, but demand our legal rights. To that extent, we hope that you stand in solidarity with us. The students of RGNUL have been out on the campus streets hungry, tired, and sleep deprived and the support of our fellows means the world to us. Support us, for we stand for principles which are espoused in our Constitution. Support us because this is a long struggle. But mostly, support us so that we can finally rid our educational institutions of maladministration and focus on the motive for our presence in them – quality education.

We request you to reach out to us, share the news of our movement or contribute in any other way you feel is within you. We hope to succeed in this movement, and we look forward to a RGNUL without injustices.

Regards,  
Students of RGNUL.